



Ohio Children's Hospital Association

Saving, protecting and enhancing children's lives

Media Statement

April 10, 2024

The following statement can be attributed to Nick Lashutka, President & CEO, Ohio Children's Hospital Association, in response to Governor DeWine's State of the State Address today:

Governor DeWine continues to underscore his deserved recognition as the governor who champions children. Today, his State of the State speech reinforced the important commitments and investments needed to continue to improve and enhance child health in Ohio.

Ohio's children's hospitals are global leaders and at the forefront of making care safer while improving outcomes for kids worldwide. We believe in the power of learning networks to improve child health outcomes. The Children's Hospitals' Solutions for Patient Safety (SPS), which began in Ohio as a partnership with the Ohio Business Roundtable in 2009, now includes 150 children's hospitals across the world, has saved more than 26,000 children from serious harm and removed \$558 million in costs from the healthcare system.

Based on this unique experience, we believe the Outcomes Acceleration for Kids (OAK) Learning Network, a partnership between Ohio's children's hospitals, our pediatric Accountable Care Organizations, the Ohio Department of Medicaid and Medicaid managed care plans, holds great promise to improve health outcomes for all kids – especially those in Medicaid. With more than half of Ohio's children relying on Medicaid for health care coverage – a successful collaboration has the potential to significantly impact this program in a positive manner.

At the same time, there is a pediatric mental health crisis affecting children in our great state and across the country. Kids with complex behavioral health conditions often struggle to access the right level of care in the right place at the right time. We applaud Governor DeWine's efforts to solve these challenges through OhioRISE, increased support for behavioral health services for kids, and the newly created Department of Children & Youth's focus on supporting kids with long-term behavioral health needs.

Children's hospitals have strong community partnerships – especially with our local school districts in providing important primary care in school-based health clinics. We applaud Governor DeWine for continuing to support and provide resources to foster these relationships to improve health outcomes.

The Ohio Children's Hospital Association and our six members – Akron Children's Hospital, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Dayton Children's Hospital, Nationwide Children's Hospital, ProMedica Russell J. Ebeid Children's Hospital, and UH/Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital – work every day to save, protect and enhance the lives of Ohio's children, and we look forward to Governor DeWine and the Ohio General Assembly to ensure Ohio's children have access to the highest quality care available when they need it, where they need it.

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